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The *Gesta Francorum* as Narrative History*

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The Deeds of the Franks and of the other Jerusalemers (Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum) is a narrative of the First Crusade, which begins with a brief general introduction and follows the course of Bohemond's expedition from its recruiting in the south of Italy in 1096 to the capture of Antioch in June 1098. Thereafter its author left the service of Bohemond to continue to the final goal of the expedition, Jerusalem. The history ends with the victory of the Franks over the Egyptian army, a few weeks later, on 12 August 1099. In several of the early manuscripts there is an appendix consisting of a description of the holy places at Jerusalem, the proper of a mass in honour of the Holy Sepulchre, and the measurements of the Sepulchre.[1]

The *Gesta Francorum* is one of a group of eye-witness histories of the First Crusade, each of which reflects the experience of one of the major contingents in various ways and to various degrees: Raymond of Aguilers of the Provençal expedition, Albert of Aachen of Duke Godfrey's contingent and Fulcher of Chartres of the northern French and thereafter of Baldwin at Edessa. Of all these works, the *Gesta* is probably the earliest, and preserves the most vivid eye-witness impressions, if only because of the author's habit of writing long stretches of his narrative in the first person plural. His name is not recorded in any of the surviving manuscripts, and was unknown to the writers who used his work a few years later; if there was ever a dedicatory epistle, it must have been lost immediately. We have therefore no choice but to christen him, for purposes of convenience, Anon. At least, however, we can be fairly sure, from the manuscripts and other early mentions, that Anon's chosen title for his book has been correctly preserved.[2]

The importance of the *Gesta*, however, extends far beyond its status as an eye-witness record, because it was to be very influential in the development of crusading ideas. Several twelfth-century manuscripts preserve the text, albeit in a number of related forms.[3] Far more important in the history of crusading thought was the re-writing of the *Gesta* in the years after 1105 by no less than three major northern French authors, all of them Benedictine monks: Robert of Reims, Guibert of Nogent and Baudri of Bourgueil. They were all fiercely critical of his style, which they saw as far too pedestrian for such a noble theme, and they recast it completely. Baudri rather offensively suggests that the author concealed his identity because he was ashamed of his wretched style: 'Some compiler or other, suppressing his name, produced a very crude little book (*libellum ... nimis rusticanum)* on this subject.'[4] Nevertheless, they derived much of their narrative from him, and were inevitably influenced by his ideas, although (as Jonathan Riley-Smith has recently emphasised) they went much further in their theological reflection on what had happened.[5] The ideas of these French writers in turn helped to shape, whether directly or indirectly, the thinking of Bernard of Clairvaux and of the papal encyclical with which Eugenius III launched the Second Crusade, *Quantum Predecessores*, by which official papal crusading ideology was to be profoundly influenced. The *Gesta* therefore reaches back into the events of the First Crusade and links them with perhaps the most important of all the schools of crusading ideology. Given its significance, it is not surprising that historians have argued fiercely about the circumstances of its composition. In this paper, however, I shall not primarily concern myself with these disputes, but take, as an example of medieval narrative, the text of the oldest manuscript, which is the basis for Rosalind Hill's edition. Whatever the history which lies behind this text, its scribe obviously intended the public to listen to it as it stands; and this I propose to do.

Anon's Latin was not incorrect, in the sense that he knew how the nouns decline and the verbs conjugate. He had quite a good grasp, which was not shared by all his contemporaries, when to use the indicative and when the subjunctive. We do not have to read far, however, before we come to understand the acid comments of writers like Guibert of Nogent. To a scholar with a foundation in the classics and a massive reading in the Fathers, Anon's narrative appeared simplistic indeed; and his great nineteenth-century editor Heinrich Hagenmeyer did not conceal his own sympathy with the criticism of

the French Benedictines. Anon rarely used the grammatical devices characteristic of classical literary composition. Accusatives and infinitives are rare, as is the ablative absolute, and even participles are not very frequent. Some of his grammatical structures would have appeared illiterate, perhaps even incomprehensible, to classical writers: the dative serves for the accusative, as in such a phrase as *illos apprehendit, et iussit Constantinopolim imperatori caute duci. Ad* is omitted where it is required before place-names (*reversus Siciliam*), and *de* very frequently substitutes for *ex*.[6] The essential structure of each sentence is subject, verb, plus (where appropriate) object. There is no direct quotation of classical authors, nor any evidence of a solid reading in them, although there may be a few phrases which had been conveyed through grammar-books.[7] Nor, for that matter, does he quote the Scripture all that often, and when he does it is always as part of a speech ascribed to one of his characters.

The consequence of his method of forming sentences is that Anon's narrative proceeds like a series of building blocks, or alternatively like a game of dominoes. The elaborate compound-complex structures characteristic of much classical Latin are totally absent: each sentence is a unit in itself, usually a rather small one, almost always with a word devoted to linking it with the previous sentence: then, therefore, so, at length. Unlike the style of the Ciceronic period, these words are simply conjunctions (or even disjunctions); they do not create any subordination between one phrase and the next.

As an example of this approach, we may take the description of the march towards Antioch.[8] The first sentence begins with *deinde*. We then continue in turn with the link-words which we have just mentioned: *igitur*, *itaque*, *tandem*, *ibi*. This final sentence is a real tour-de-force, consisting as it does of a long string of 'ands': 'Peter of Roaix divided himself there from the others, and on the next night he crossed near Antioch, and he entered the valley of Rugia, and he found Turks and Saracens, and he fought with them, and he killed many of them, and he pursued others very much.' It is not surprising that Rosalind Hill, who is an elegant translator, could not bear such a sequential treatment in English, and introduced a number of subordinate clauses: 'entering the valley of Rugia where he found Turks and Saracens whom he attacked, killing many of them and driving the others into headlong flight'. The problem for an English translator is usually to disentangle the complexities of Latin structure into the simpler forms which we prefer. It must be quite rare for the

translator to feel obliged to complicate the Latin because of its unacceptable simplicity. It is true that medieval Latin generally used a much more sequential structure than was favoured by the writers of the classical golden age, but Anon must be almost the record-holder for this parataxis. If we open the pages of Fulcher of Chartres, for example, we find that, although he was not a particularly complex or pretentious writer, there is enormously more hypotaxis. This type of sequential narrative has led several commentators to point to the similarities with the Gospel stories in the Vulgate. There is a real resemblance in spirit, although I would be very surprised if there is direct influence. The vocabulary is a good deal different, and so, when they are examined in detail, are the stylistic devices. We are probably looking at fundamentally the same phenomenon: the evangelists (and particularly Saint Mark) had been educated in a *koiné* Greek culture which was different from the sophisticated texts of the classics, and moreover they were concerned to preserve as accurately as possible the narrative of God's marvellous works in history; and the same statements were true of Anon, with his roots in a simple Latin culture and his wonder at the deeds which had been worked through the soldiers of Christ.

One of the effects of this approach is that Anon provides very few references to preceding or following events. At the beginning of the book, there is a brief account of the preaching of the First Crusade, and of the misadventures of the contingents accompanying Peter the Hermit, who had set off in advance of the other armies. After that, the narrative consists almost entirely of the actions of the army as Anon saw or heard of them, and shows almost no retrospection or foreknowledge. A striking example is the account of the discovery of the Holy Lance at Antioch, where it is unhesitatingly accepted as (to quote the words of Saint Andrew) 'such a sign as shall fill them with joy and confidence, so that if they will fight, their enemies shall all be overcome'.[9] At no point does Anon indicate that the authenticity was to be challenged by severe criticisms, and that its champion Peter Bartholomew was to die in an ordeal to defend it. This absence of foresight convinced Hagenmeyer that we are dealing here with a war diary (*Tagebuch*), or else with a narrative based on a diary, so that the writer genuinely did not know what was going to happen the following month. Whether this suggestion about its composition can be sustained or not, it does reflect the impression we have of the course of the narrative. The disjunctions in the story are underlined by changes in

the vocabulary. In spite of the title of the book, the westerners are called Gauls more than Franks in the introduction, whereas the number of later occurrences of *Franci* and its cognates is enormous.[10] The goal of the crusade, too, is always the Holy Sepulchre. Jerusalem is only mentioned once before the fall of Antioch, and that is as the source of Saracen troops directed against the crusaders. The word 'Jerusalem' then appears frequently, but primarily in a topographical sense, as the destination of their military activities. These variations in usage should not be seen as inconsistencies, but as reflections of the changing events. The striking thing is how transparently the narrative seems to express the course of the expedition.

The absence of cross-references is paralleled by a lack of the sort of reflection which we would expect to find in the history of so great an event. Our author renounces, or does not command, the verbal means of a sustained reflection. He does not much like abstract words, and where he employs them, he sticks as closely as is possible to the material world: *iudicium* is a specific act of decision, and words such as *paganorum occisio et sanguinis effusio* are scarcely to be termed abstract except in a purely grammatical sense.[11] Similarly, Anon makes little attempt to describe the character or assess the motivation of the leaders of the crusade. He likes adjectives, but they are drawn from a limited range of military expressions. Bohemond makes his appearance as *bellipotens Boamundus*, his followers are *inuictissimi milites*, his constable is *uir fortis*.[12] Quite amazingly, as seen from our point of view, he makes no comment when Bohemond abandons the expedition to Jerusalem and settles for Antioch. Anon offers neither condemnation nor justification of so critical a decision. All of this makes one understand why Hagenmeyer saw our author as a simple soldier-man, a knight who had enough elementary Latin to keep a diary and to write it up afterwards. But this is the point at which doubts begin to surface about the completeness of the picture which we have drawn so far.

There are three elements in *Gesta Francorum* as a narrative which were not, to my mind, sufficiently appreciated in Heinrich Hagenmeyer's classic assessment of a century ago, and which have provided the basis for a more positive assessment by scholars in relatively recent times. They are that Anon was a more sophisticated Latinist than has been recognised in the past; that his story of events is rooted in a significant vernacular culture; and that his presentation of ideas about crusading ideology was both influential and creative.

It was characteristic of the literary ideals of the period to insist that the choice of style must be determined by the dignity of the subject. In part this reflected an ancient conviction that the style was in some sense an added value, like the decoration of a church, but there was a strong conviction that the topic should determine the rhetoric. This was not an easy choice for good Latinists to make, because a dignified subject clearly demanded a high style, while Christian tradition insisted on the merits of simple sincerity. As Jerome had trenchantly expressed it, 'it is much better to write the truth crudely than lies elegantly'.[13] The French Benedictines did not have much difficulty in evaluating the *Gesta*, however: it was composed far too much in *sermo humilis*, or rather *stilus rusticanus*, to be appropriate to a history of the First Crusade, which they believed to be the greatest historical theme available to them, greater as an act of God than even the victories of Israel in the Old Testament. It must be remembered that there had been a rapid expansion of literary education in northern France in the preceding generation, and Guibert of Nogent and Baudri of Bourgueil, in particular, are major representatives of the new French humanism. These figures of the so-called Twelfth-Century Renaissance possessed a wide vocabulary and rich knowledge of grammatical structures drawn from the classics and Christian antiquity. Like Hagenmeyer in the nineteenth century, they read the *Gesta* through the spectacles of a wide literary education, and they did not like what they saw.

It has more recently been argued by Oehler that Anon was not a crude writer with a knowledge of only basic Latin, but that he represents a rhetorical tradition which cannot appropriately be judged by the standards of Cicero. The text is packed with stylistic devices which are more familiar to us from the wording of charters or from works in the vernacular, but which were also favoured by medieval Latin writers. The author delighted in alliteration. The wall of Antioch is *mirabiliter latus, magnisque lapidibus compositus*, and the city *clauditur quatuor magnis montaneis*. He likes alternating consonants of this sort, as in *propter timorem pessimorum Turcorum*. A new paragraph, or more exactly a new turn in the subject, may be introduced by echoing consonants: *clauditur civitas, dux denique Godefridus, bellipotens Boamundus*. Admittedly, he never quite achieves the splendid stammering effects of Fulcher of Chartres in a phrase like *historiae seriem propter pulchritudinem partium pompaticam*.[14] Rhyme and assonance are frequent; a striking example is the conversation between the Moslem commander Corbaran and his

mother, which is designed to give a bizarre effect. Corbaran challenges his mother about her statements *quod illi Christiani uincent nos in Antiochena prelia, et quod ipsi capturi sunt nostra spolia, nosque persecuturi magna uictoria...* To which his mother replies, *quoniam gens Christiana super nos foret uentura, et nos ubique uictura, et super paganos regnatura.*[15] Incidentally, this passage shows our author in command of the future participle, which he rarely uses elsewhere, just as he also shows that he understands the ablative absolute; it is simply that he does not like to use them very much. A similar type of rhyme is shown in a battle description: *Stabant uero inimici/ Dei et nostri/ undique iam stupefacti/ et uehementer perterriti/ putantes nostros se/ deuincere et occidere/ sicut fecerat gentem comitis et Bohemundi.*[16] Plays on words are common: *Tunc nos accensi occisione nostrorum.*[17] It is also clear that Anon, like Fulcher, but to a far greater extent, uses the rhythmic *cursus* endings for his sentences, especially the simplified range which is more characteristic of northern Europe. Oehler has pointed out that there are few sentences in the whole work which do not have rhythmic endings, with a large preponderance of the forms common in French and German usage, the *cursus planus*, *tardus* and *velox.*[18]

At the present stage of the discussion, we have to be cautious in arriving at a judgement of the place of Anon's style in the picture of the period as a whole. Of the crusading writers, only he and Fulcher (by Oehler and Verena Epp respectively) have been closely examined from that point of view, and there has been no analysis of the style of southern Italian writers, and especially of charter writers, among whom - at a guess - I would be inclined to locate our author's cultural home. One must remember, too, that Latin is inclined to produce assonance and rhyme, and that a *cursus* ending to a sentence may arise by accident as well as design. Nonetheless, Oehler has identified so many of these stylistic effects that they seem clearly to justify his conclusion that 'the author shows himself so skilled in the handling of words and in the use of a variety of verbal effects (*Klangfiguren*) that the *Gesta* can hardly have been his first work.[19] This is not a primitive writer but one trained in a tradition which, whatever our own preferences may be in the matter, is quite different from the more elaborate literary approach represented by Guibert and Baudri.

His narrative is close to that of vernacular culture. In a real if limited sense, the *Gesta Francorum* is a *chanson de geste.* We know that the First Crusade generated vernacular narrative songs. The *Song*

of Antioch survives only in a late twelfth-century form, attributed to the trouvère Graindor of Arras, but behind that lies an earlier composition by Richard the Pilgrim, even if the date and form of this work is uncertain. Many features of the *Gesta* recall the story-telling of the songs. The author, for example, is very fond indeed of spoken encounters. There are some great set-pieces, like the obituary speech on Bohemond by his brother Guy at Philomelium, when he believed the crusade to have been defeated, or the long conversation between Corbaran and his mother. There are innumerable other speeches in the history; Anon resorts to direct speech so frequently that, in Rosalind Hill's edition, it is not easy to find a page without it. The narrative of the encounter of Baldwin and Tancred at Tarsus, for example, proceeds in a series of speeches, by Tancred, the Turks and the citizens in turn.[20] In his 1924 edition, Louis Bréhier argued that the speeches had been added to the first-person text by a clerical editor, but this suggestion now looks improbable. Subsequent study has shown that the stylistic features of speeches and narrative are very similar, and the sheer amount of direct speech defeats the suggestion. If all the speeches were removed, the text would be a tattered garment indeed, and there seems little reason to remove only the longer ones.[21] The fact seems to be that Anon, like many composers of *chansons*, like for that matter Villehardouin at the time of the Fourth Crusade, had a strong preference for the dramatic encounter of speakers in confrontation. Like a good *chanson*, too, the *Gesta* has a hero in Bohemond. He is, very frequently, *dominus*, the lord Bohemond, and while heroic epithets are rarely ascribed to the other leaders, Bohemond is richly endowed with them. Tributes are delivered in his praise. When they gave command to him at the Battle of the Lake on 9 February 1098, the princes told him, 'You are brave and skilful in war, a great man of high repute, resolute and fortunate, and you know how to plan a battle and how to dispose your forces'. His brother Guy, hearing, as he supposed, of his death, called him 'honour and glory of the whole world, whom all the world feared and loved!'. He even has an unsolicited testimonial from the enemy in the person of Corbaran's mother: 'Bohemond and Tancred are mortal, like all other men, but their god loves them exceedingly beyond all others, and therefore he grants them excelling courage in battle'.[22] The status of Bohemond as hero is rather like that of Count William in his *chansons:* he makes devout speeches and indeed rarely puts a foot wrong in matters of piety, but he does not have the same supernatural calling, confirmed

by visions, as Duke Godfrey in the narrative of Albert of Aachen. We may also trace individual similarities of attitude between the author of the *Gesta* and the composers of *chansons*. For example, the praise of Turkish courage there is echoed by the admiration expressed in the *Song of Roland* for the brave warriors among the Moslems; and this, perhaps surprisingly, is not a very common sentiment in the literature of Christian warfare. The narrative structure in both cases, too, tolerates disruption in a way which later compositions would find unacceptable. Both the *Gesta* and the *Song of Roland* lose their heroes half-way. Roland is removed by death, but the poem launches into a sequel. Bohemond, the conqueror of Antioch, loses his praise-words and his centrality when he does not continue to Jerusalem, but there is no condemnation or discussion of what had happened. In neither case, it seems, was the writer disturbed by the discontinuity of the story.

The style also has to it the ring of the *chansons*. Some of the Latin effects which we have noted, such as assonance and alliteration, are fundamental to the vernacular style. He has the same formulaic approach to description, with standard expressions used repeatedly in similar situations, such as *summo diluculo* (10 occurrences) and *timore perterriti* (9). Landscape descriptions are repetitive, and the adjectives used of the leaders do not ring the changes, and are not attempts to indicate individual character. *Sapiens*, *prudens*, *fortis* are usually enough, like *sage* and *preux* in Old French. In saying this, I am not suggesting that Anon thought in his vernacular, whether that be French or some early Italian dialect. Very occasionally, a Latin word does suggest a translation. When Guy was attacking Stephen of Blois for running away, he said *non audiui loqui de militia aliqua, quam idem fecisset*. Here, *militia* sounds like a deed of chivalry, *chevalerie*. It may be a very early occurrence of the word in that sense, and one which is being rendered into an intractable medium as *militia*.[23] With these very few exceptions, it is much more natural to see the writer as a representative of a Latin culture which shared many of the features of the vernacular songs which already, we may safely assume, delighted the aristocracy. He was bringing to his hearers a real-life epic. While this method of writing may well have been natural to him, and have reflected the cultural background from which he came, it is also possible that it was in part deliberately adopted as an approach to his audience. His links with Bohemond suggest that he may initially have had an Italian audience in mind, and the similarity between Latin and the various Italian vernaculars was probably close enough to

enable them to understand the narrative, just as Italian congregations, before Vatican II, could often understand the Latin mass.

The author of the *Gesta* had a distinctive outlook upon the theology of the crusade, but an attempt to define it raises the question of the relationship between the ideas of the individual writer and those of the new community of Jerusalemers, as he called them. It is easy to talk about the narrative as a record of the crusade experience, but much harder to be sure how far the terms he uses and the reflections he records were his own, or those of the clergy or of the army as a whole. Ernest Blake has commented that 'the first-hand accounts ... leave the impression, not so much of spontaneous religious fervour as of strenuous sermonising, drumming into the secularly-minded the lessons to be drawn from reverses and successes'.[24] Perhaps the most dramatic illustration of his identification with the army is his persistent reference to them as *nos*, *nostri* or in the first person plural. I personally think that Hagenmeyer misunderstood what was happening when he treated these passages as diary entries, and tried to track down the particular group with which the author was associating himself. He seems to express his identity with the whole or with any of its parts; we cannot use this evidence to establish that he was knight, footman, clerk, or even part of the storming party into Antioch.[25] The usage is like that of the *Song of Roland*, where 'we' normally expresses the speaker's identification with the whole Christian army.

In the light of this sense of belonging, he presents us with specific episodes which almost certainly expressed the spirit of the expedition as a whole. The visions which guarantee martyrdom, the lights and comets, the appearance of heavenly knights on the battlefield, and the finding of the Holy Lance, all of these must have spoken of the persistence of God's favour, and all are recorded by our author. Even these passages have to be read carefully: Anon never indicates the severe doubts within the army about the authenticity of the Holy Lance, which are so prominent in Raymond and some other writers.[26] Another material symbol of divine protection was the sign of the cross. In nearly every case when he mentioned it, he was referring to its use as a sign by the army. It is reasonable to suppose that the rank and file valued the protection which it gave, and that he was reflecting a general conviction, although it is interesting to overhear the voice of the preacher at one point: the noble count of Flanders, we are told, was 'armed on all sides by the rule of faith and the sign of the cross which

he carried faithfully every day'. Others, presumably, more careless or more sceptical, did not wear their cross so regularly.[27]

Much of the theology in the narrative is embodied in the terminology which the author uses, and here it is hard to know how far his approach is individual. Particularly striking is his 'soldiers of Christ' spirituality: there are many usages such as *militia Christi*, *milites Christi*, or (less frequently) *milites Dei*. This is specially important, because it is distinctive: in the letters from the crusading leaders, such terms are rare, and apply in particular to the heavenly knights who appeared on the battlefield. Raymond does not use them much and Albert, in his very long text, hardly at all. The *Gesta* seems to be the door through which this important concept entered crusading spirituality. Side by side with this language are usages which are common to most of the crusading chronicles: the crusaders are called pilgrims, *peregrini*, on the way to the Holy Sepulchre, *via* or *iter Sancti Sepulchri*. He has a concern for the poor, which is expressed on a number of occasions, and nowhere so clearly as in his brief obituary notice of Bishop Adhemar, who

> was a helper of the poor and a counsellor of the rich, and he used to keep the clergy in order and preach to the knights, warning them and saying, "None of you can be saved if he does not respect the poor and succour them; you cannot be saved without them, and they cannot survive without you".

Many of these themes, as Jonathan Riley-Smith has shown, were taken up by Guibert and his colleagues into the theological reflection characteristic of their works, but it is worth saying that they do not always improve on the *Gesta*. All three of them, for example, referred to the passage about Adhemar's care for the poor, but they tended to turn it into a more conventional exhortation to almsgiving, while two of them read it inaccurately as a description of Adhemar's deathbed. Participation in the expedition had generated thinking about care for the poor and the divine economy of salvation which could not be recaptured in the conventional setting of a Benedictine monastery.[28]

I said at the beginning of this paper that I did not intend to examine further the question of how and when the Gesta was composed. It has, however, certain implications for our understanding of the writing of the work, which must be briefly noted. It is a work by a single author. The many speeches are inherent in the whole, united with it by

stylistic similarities, and Bréhier's theory of an original narrative re-written by a clerical author is improbable. This, of course, would not exclude the possibility of some briefer interpolations into an earlier version of the text, such as the addition of a grant by the Emperor Alexius to Bohemond, or the description of the city of Antioch.[29]

The examination of the narrative approach of the *Gesta* in this paper obviously does not affect the external evidence about the date at which it was written. It was used by Robert of Reims, Guibert of Nogent and Baudri of Bourgueil. Although we cannot give a firm starting-point for any of these works, this must mean that several copies were circulating in northern France by 1105 at latest. On the other hand, we cannot be sure that the 'little book' about the history of the First Crusade which Ekkehard found at Jerusalem in 1101 was the *Gesta*; on the whole, it is unlikely that it was.[30] The widely accepted view that the greater part was written at Antioch rests upon some observable differences in approach, and especially in the treatment of Bohemond: after Antioch the praise-words for him disappear, and he is simply one of a number of leaders. That the final book (Book X) was finished at Jerusalem before the end of 1099 is also suggested by the favourable mention of the election of Arnulf as patriarch: it is difficult to believe that the author would have written in such terms if he had known that by the end of the year Arnulf was to be deposed.[31] In this paper, I have suggested that it was Anon's style to write a sequential narrative without cross-references to the past or future, and that, like the author of a *chanson de geste*, he was untroubled by the change of content and of hero in the final book. If this is right, it gives ground for some hesitation in accepting these features as a conclusive proof of dating, as they would be if they occurred, for example, in Fulcher of Chartres. Nevertheless, it does not exclude the possibility of a very early date. The lack of concern with continuity explains why it was possible for Anon to write a final book which was rather different from the rest, but it does not explain why he should have wished to do so, unless he were continuing a work which had been largely composed at Antioch. If the whole were composed as propaganda for Bohemond, as some historians have suggested, the character of the last book is rather difficult to explain.

The acceptance of single authorship makes it virtually certain that Anon was a clerk. It is true that some form of lay authorship for crusading narratives was not inconceivable to contemporaries: Raymond of Aguilers had a lay collaborator who was killed in the

course of the crusade, and the *Gesta* mentions the possibility: 'I cannot tell you all the things which we did before the city was taken, because there is no one in these parts, either clerk or lay, who could entirely write or narrate as it was done'.[32] A clerical author for a Latin work at the time is however overwhelmingly probable. It is true that clergy, having received a Latin education, might transfer to lay life - Baldwin I of Jerusalem is the most striking contemporary example. The only solid ground for supposing that the author was a knight is to be found in Hagenmeyer's deductions from the 'we'-passages, which rested on the conviction that they were extracts from a diary, and that it is possible to work out the group within the expedition with which the writer is associating himself.[33] It is however difficult to accept his conclusions, and the text itself shows clear indications of a clerical education. I have argued that the author emerges as a representative of a Latin culture which had its own rules of composition and which had a good deal in common with vernacular narrative. His skill in handling Latin style (according to the conventions which he accepted) is underlined by some signs of considerable learning: he frequently calculated the dates of events in Roman reckoning - a task which, a century later, was too much for Villehardouin - and some of his doxologies show a good deal of theological knowledge, such as the thanksgiving to the Trinity after the first defeat of the Moslems in the Battle of Dorylaum.[34] His telling of the story of the First Crusade expressed (through the signs and wonders of God's protection) the spirituality of its participants, and incorporated some ideas which are distinctive of this chronicle and important for the future. He has left us a work which is both a Latin *chanson de geste* and an expression of God's great deeds through the *militia Christi*.

APPENDIX: *nos* and *nostri* in the *Gesta*.

The 'we'-passages, in which Anon writes in the first person plural, occupy a considerable part of the Gesta, and their correct understanding is important for our knowledge of the author. In many cases, there is simply no problem about them: *nos* and *nostri* represent the whole crusading army, with whose cause Anon unconditionally identified himself. Hagenmeyer, however, went much further than this, reading them as essentially diary entries which provide a clue to the particular group with which Anon was associated. Sometimes, Anon does seem to place himself consistently in one part of the army. At the end of February 1098, Bohemond and Raymond of S.Gilles set out

from the siege of Antioch to St Simeon's Port to secure builders for a proposed castle. Anon apparently stayed behind: *nos uero qui remansimus*. He then tells of a successful Turkish attack on the force returning from St Simeon, and of Bohemond's separate arrival *ad nos ... qui eramus in unum congregati*.[35] Such consistency is rare. On other occasions, his use of *nos* and *nostri* fluctuates, as in this description of the fighting at Dorylaeum: 'After this had all been done, the Turks were surrounding *us* on all sides, skirmishing, throwing darts and javelins and shooting arrows from an astonishing range. And so although *we* could not resist them nor suffer the weight of so many enemies, yet *we* went forward as one man. *Our women*, too, were a great strength for *us* on that day, and brought water to drink to *our* fighters, and always bravely supported *them* as *they* fought and defended'.[36] Worse still, *nos* may be applied to two forces which were many miles distant, such as the army which at the end of December 1097 defeated a relieving force from Damascus and the troops which had remained outside Antioch.[37] It is therefore unsafe to assume that the occurrence of *nos* in the description of the entry into Antioch establishes that the author was personally in the party, and still more that we can deduce from such passages his rank and status. The attempt to do so, indeed, produces rather absurd results. In the battle outside Antioch on 28 June 1098 the author appears on this basis to be one of the knights: *nos ... equitauimus contra illos*. By the following May, he appears to distinguish himself from the knights: *nostri denique milites precedentes nos liberauerunt ante nos uiam illam*.[38] The suggestion that by now he had lost his horse seems a desperate solution. The truth is that *nos* is not a diary entry which is determined by the status and position of the author; its fluctuating use expresses a powerful *wir-gefühl*, a sense of identification with the crusading army of Christ.

NOTES

* This paper was read to the Graduate Centre for Medieval Studies at Reading in March 1992, and I am grateful to my colleagues there for their perceptive comments, many of which have been incorporated in this final version. It was initially designed as one of a sequence of studies on medieval narrative.

1 The best edition is the one edited by Rosalind Hill, *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum* (Edinburgh/Oxford 1962), which is based on the oldest manuscript, *Vatican Reginensis lat. 572*. Two older editions, which are important for their discussions of the work, are H. Hagenmeyer, *Anonymi Gesta Francorum* (Heidelberg 1890), and L. Bréhier, *Histoire anonyme de la*

première croisade (Paris 1924). Other discussions of the general approach of the author are those by E. Jamison, 'Some notes on the *Anonymi Gesta Francorum*', in *Studies in French Language and Medieval Literature presented to Mildred K. Pope (Manchester 1939)*; H.-J. Witzel, 'Le problème de l'auteur des *Gesta Francorum*', *Moyen-Age*, 61 (1955), 319-28; H. Oehler, 'Studien zu den *Gesta Francorum*', *Mittlelateinisches Jahrbuch*, 6 (1970), 58-97; and K.B. Wolf, 'Crusade and narrative: Bohemond and the *Gesta Francorum*', *Journal of Medieval History*, 17 (1991), 207-16. In the following notes, references to each of these works will consist of the author's name and the page numbers.

2 J.H. and L.L. Hill (eds), *Le Liber de Raymond d'Aguilers* (Paris 1969) and their translation, *Raymond d'Aguilers, Historia Francorum qui Ceperunt Iherusalem* (Philadelphia 1968). The published text of Albert of Aachen is in Recueil des Historiens de la Croisade Occ. 1V. 265ff, but there is a better text, with an excellent introduction, by S.B. Edgington, 'The *Historia Iherosolimitana* of Albert of Aachen: a critical edition' (Ph.D. London 1991). Other studies of the composition of the chronicle are by P. Knoch, *Studien zu Albert von Aachen* (Stuttgart 1966); E.O. Blake and C. Morris, 'A hermit goes to war: Peter and the origins of the First Crusade', *Studies in Church History*, 22 (1985), 79-108; C. Cahen, 'A propos d'Albert d'Aix et de Richard le Pèlerin', *Moyen-Age*, 6 (1990), 31-3; and C. Morris, 'The aims and spirituality of the First Crusade as seen through the eyes of Albert of Aachen', *Reading Medieval Studies*, 16 (1990), 97-117. The best text of Fulcher is by H. Hagenmeyer, *Fulcheri Carnotensis Historia Hierosolymitana* (Heidelberg 1913). See also the important discussion by V. Epp, *Fulcher von Chartres: Studien zur Geschichtsschreibung des ersten Kreuzzuges* (Düsseldorf 1990).

3 See R. Hill, introduction section V. In addition to *Vatican Reginensis lat. 572* and one direct copy, there is an Anglo-Norman version, incorporating minor stylistic changes and a little extra material, and a group of copies with more considerable alterations, in which a priest called Peter Tudebode claims to be the witness of one of the events. For this latter group, see the edition by J.H. and L.L. Hill, *Petrus Tudebodus: Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere* (Paris 1977), and their translation, *Peter Tudebode* (Philadelphia 1974). The Hills argue against the general modern assumption that *Tudebode* was a 'plagiarised' version of the *Gesta*, and suggest that both were derived from a common crusading source, which is now lost.

4 RHC Occ. IV. 10.

5 J. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (London 1986).

6 For detailed examples and references, see Hagenmeyer, pp.34-5, n.28.

7 See Hagenmeyer, p.38. They are mostly phrases such as *clamor uero resonabat ad coelum* (R. Hill, p.36; p.41), which might conceivably have originated in Virgil, but had become commonplaces. *Fecerunt denique Galli tres partes* sounds like a startling echo of Caesar, who in general was much more familiar in the nineteenth century than in the eleventh. Hagenmeyer also indicated 'numerous' echos of Widukind of Corvei, although again these fall far short of being quotations.

[8] R. Hill, pp.26-7.
[9] *Ibid.*, p.60. Exceptions to this lack of 'foresight' are the author's knowledge that Taticius and Hugh Magnus never returned after their departures from Antioch (R. Hill, p.35 and p.72).
[10] *Ibid.*, pp.1-2: *per uniuersas Galliarum regiones; cumque iam hic sermo paulatim per uniuersas regiones ac Galliarum patrias coepissent crebescere, Franci audientes talia ...; Fecerunt denique Galli tres partes.* Oddly, Rosalind Hill conceals this usage by translating all the references as 'Franks'. After the introduction, there is no use of *Galli* and only one of *Gallia*, and that because it is required by stylistic parallelism: *O infelix et infamia totius Franciae, dedecus et scelus Galliarum!* (R. Hill, p.33).
[11] *Ibid.*, p.76; p.85.
[12] *Ibid.*, p.7; pp.36-7.
[13] For this whole section, see the excellent discussion in V. Epp, *Fulcher von Chartres*, pp.310-75.
[14] R. Hill, p.77; p.35; p.6; p.7. The first of these references, admittedly, is to the set piece description of the city of Antioch, which several writers (but emphatically not Oehler and Witzel) have suppposed to be an insertion by another hand. For many examples of such devices, see Oehler, pp.69ff, and for Fulcher, see Epp. pp.313ff.
[15] R. Hill, p.55.
[16] *Ibid.*, p.40.
[17] *Ibid.*, p.40.
[18] For a full analysis, see Oehler, pp.69-71. The whole article gives many examples of the usages which are briefly described in the text above.
[19] Oehler, pp.72-3.
[20] R. Hill, pp.24-5.
[21] See Bréhier, v-vii, where the discussion is in fact a very brief and summary one.
[22] R. Hill, p.36; p.64; p.56.
[23] *Ibid.*, p.65. Several writers have pointed to words which appear to have an Italian origin. But some of them which have been found exist also in other medieval Latin texts, and there is so little Italian vernacular from this period that there is no question of identifying Italian words which Anon translated into Latin.
[24] E.O. Blake, 'The formation of the "crusade idea" ', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 21 (1970), 21. He applies the remark specifically to Raymond and Fulcher, but it is equally significant in seeking to understand the mind of the *Gesta*.
[25] See the Appendix at the end of the article.
[26] For the Lance, see R. Hill, pp.59-60 and pp.65ff. The 'fire from the sky' is mentioned on p.62, and the appearance of Saint George and the other knights on p.69 ('this is quite true, for many of our men saw it'). He mentions martyrdom several times, but never specifically tells of a vision of martyrdom, although I strongly suspect that p.17 and p.40 rest on visions, which he has taken into the narrative.

[27] R. Hill, p.31. The references to the Gospel command to take up the cross (e.g. p.1) probably understood it, at least in part, in this literal sense.
[28] *Ibid.*, p.74. The passages in the second-generation writers are in Guibert vi 13 (Recueils des Historiens des Croisades Occ. IV. 210), Baudri iii. 22 (III. 82) and Robert vii. 23 (III 839).
[29] R. Hill, p.12; pp.76-7. These two sections are oddly placed within the text, and are the best candidates for interpolation; see the footnote in Hill, p.12. Oehler and Witzel, however, have argued for their authenticity on stylistic grounds.
[30] See R. Hill, pp.ix-xi.
[31] *Ibid.*, p.93. A similar indication of early date is provided by the bitter criticism of 'that coward' Count Stephen of Blois for his desertion of the army at Antioch, which suggests that the author did not know of Stephen's return to the East in 1101 and his gallant death at the hands of the Moslems in May 1102 (pp.63-5).
[32] *Ibid.*, p.44. Does this mean that a clerk would be expected to write and a layman to narrate?
[33] See the Appendix above.
[34] R. Hill, p.21.
[35] *Ibid.*, pp.39-40.
[36] *Ibid.*, p.19.
[37] *Ibid.*, pp.31-2.
[38] *Ibid.*, p.47; p.70; p.86. This last reference is in a long passage in which *nos* clearly refers to the whole expedition.